

Remarks

The above Amendments and these Remarks are in reply to the Office Action mailed February 1, 2006.

No fee is due for the addition of any new claims.

Claims 1-19 and 23-45 are pending in the Application prior to the outstanding Office Action. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-19, 23-42, and 45. Claims 43 and 44 are objected to. The present Reply cancels claims 1-19, 23-42 and 45, amends claims 43 and 44, and adds new claims 46-66, leaving for the Examiner's present consideration claims 43, 44, and 46-66. Reconsideration of the objection to claims 43 and 44 is requested.

I. REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102(B) OVER *GRAHAM* (WO 98/51078)

Claims 1-15, 17, 23-36, 38, 41, 42 and 45

The Examiner rejected claims 1-15, 17, 23-36, 38, 41, 42 and 45 as being anticipated by WO 98/51078 to *Graham*. Applicants request cancellation of claims 1-15, 17, 23-36, 38, 41, 42 and 45.

II. REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(A) OVER *GRAHAM* IN VIEW OF *NIMIRI, ET AL.* (U.S. PAT. NO. 6,771,302)

Claims 16 and 37

The Examiner rejected claims 16 and 37 as being unpatentable over *Graham* in view of *Nimiri*. Applicants request cancellation of claims 16 and 37.

III. REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(A) OVER *GRAHAM* IN VIEW OF *KAJII, ET AL.* (JP358021961A)

Claims 18 and 39

The Examiner rejected claims 18 and 39 as being unpatentable over *Graham* in view of *Kajii*. Applicants request cancellation of claims 18 and 39.

IV. REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(A) OVER *GRAHAM* IN VIEW OF *ISHIBASHI* (JP411234640A)

Claims 19 and 40

The Examiner rejected claims 19 and 40 as being unpatentable over *Graham* in view of *Ishibashi*. Applicants request cancellation of claims 19 and 40.

V. ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Claims 42 and 43

The Examiner objected to claims 43 and 44 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 43 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Because claim 44 depends from claim 43, it is believed that overcoming the objection to claim 43 places claim 44 in a condition for allowance.

VI. ADDITIONAL CLAIMS

Claims 46-66

The newly added claim is, it is submitted, allowable over the cited art.


VII. CONCLUSION

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application should be allowable, and a Notice of Allowance is requested. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if he can assist in any way in expediting issuance of a patent.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 4/3/06

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